



# Engrossing News

## Quotes from Recent Graduates

Your prayers and financial support made the following testimonies possible. Thank you!

May 2005

Don Paul Gross  
www.gfmse.org  
www.emergingscholars.org



Barry and Linnea

*"Linnea and I could not imagine life in graduate school without our friends in the InterVarsity's Graduate Christian Fellowship (GCF) community at Vanderbilt. The willingness of fellow believers to join us in engaging important and complex ideas served as a reminder of God's presence with us as we navigated the intellectual challenges of academic life. The encouragement and fellowship of this thoughtful and loving Christian community also provided a source of spiritual strength in the midst of difficult circumstances. We pray that God continues to work through GCF to minister to future graduate students in powerful ways, just as we have experienced in our own time here."*

*- Barry Robinson, PhD in History, has accepted a tenure track position at Samford University in Birmingham*

*"When I moved to Nashville, InterVarsity's Graduate Christian Fellowship became my family away from home. My closest friendships in graduate school were formed through GCF. When my husband, Greg, became a youth pastor during my second year of graduate school, I faced the challenge of balancing activities as a student and as a pastor's wife. The GCF bible study we attended was a supportive group of friends that encouraged me to focus on things of eternal as well as academic significance."*

*- Sarah (Bowling) Owens, PhD in Neuroscience, will be starting a post-doctoral position in Neuroscience at Vanderbilt*



Sarah and Greg

*"During my time at Vanderbilt, GCF was invaluable in my Christian development. I developed many friendships during both large and small group studies. It also helped me become a better scientist; as "iron sharpens iron" studying God's word and discussing His creation not only provoked me to become a better, more thoughtful professional, but also provided a model to Christ-likeness in the workplace."*

*- Michael Oldham, PhD in Biochemistry, has started a post-doctoral position at Purdue University*

**Financial Contributions can be sent to:**  
InterVarsity Christian Fellowship  
P.O. Box 7895  
Madison, WI 53707-7895  
**All gifts are tax deductible.**

## Good News and Bad News about Graduation

As I sit in the crowd watching the graduates walk down the aisle and receive the diploma they have agonized over for many years, I feel a real sense of pride for them. They have persevered year after year in a diligent effort to complete a PhD. At the same time, I feel a real sadness about their moving on. Then I think about all the other students whom God has led out of this place to serve Him in other places. Central to our mission is to send students out to do the work to which God has called them. That is the good news and the bad news.

## Prayer Bookmark Please Pray . . .

**Sunday:** For us as a family - that this day will be one of rest, a time of good worship, and a time of renewal for the coming week.

**Monday:** For me, Don Paul, that God would grant wisdom, vision, and love as I serve staff and students in the Southeast.

**Tuesday:** For student leaders on the various campuses – that God would be at work in their hearts and use them for His purposes.

**Wednesday:** For funding for the ministry – that God would raise up new financial partners for us and for staff I supervise.

**Thursday:** For God to bless our staff, volunteers, and student leaders in the various campuses in the Southeast, especially in Atlanta.

**Friday:** That God would raise up staff to minister to graduate students and faculty where we have no staff.

**Saturday:** That God would renew the hearts and minds of Christians in the academic world and use them to make a significant difference for Him.

Please tear, or if you prefer cut, along the dotted line. If possible, please put it in a place that will remind you to pray for us.

## Ministry to Asian Scholars in South Florida

Ginger was able to join me as I made a supervisory trip to south Florida to visit staff workers Gary and Marlene Cameron. While there, we were able to visit an “Asian Scholar Bible Study” that is designed for (you guessed it!) Asian scholars who are not Christians but want to know more about Christianity and the Bible. Since we were there, one of the group members has become a Christian. We thank God for Gary and Marlene’s ministry and His work on the campus of Florida International University and the University of Miami.

## Travels and the Bigger Picture

As I write this letter, I am trying to figure out what is interesting to you as a reader and possibly someone who prays for or financially supports this ministry. My days are filled with all sorts of stuff that needs to be done and done well to enable the staff to do the work to which God has called them. So, since I last wrote, I have planned the budgets of 8 staff for the coming year, and I have made six trips – five of them in consecutive weeks. Since March 15, I have written and sent 518 emails. I am not passionate about writing email or traveling or preparing budgets. However, when I hear students and faculty discuss the impact the work the staff I serve is having on their campuses and in their lives, I become passionate and eager to see such work grow broader and deeper.

## Family News

All the kids have had a good year in school and in their other activities. They are eager for summer break and are getting more and more restless as the time draws near. This summer, both Ginger’s brothers are getting married so we are hoping the kids will “clean-up real nice” in fancy clothes. I, Don Paul, coached Nolan’s soccer team as well as helped lead/teach our adult Sunday school class at church. Like many in our season of life, we feel blessed and a little overwhelmed.

## If you are interested . . .

On a semi-regular basis, I send out prayer updates via email. If you would like to receive these updates, please email me and let me know.